THE

CASE

OF

John Palmer, *and* Thomas Symonds, *Gentlemen.*

Executed near *Worceſter* on the 7th of *May*, 1708. upon the Evidence of *Gyles Hunt*, who having obtain'd his own Pardon, charg'd them to have been concern'd with himſelf in the Murder of Mrs. *Alice Palmer*, Mother to the ſaid Mr. *John Palmer*, and her Maid.

WITH

The Letter of the ſaid two Gentlemen to the Lord Biſhop of *Oxon*, aſſerting their Innocence, and giving an Account how they were prevail'd on to confeſs themſelves Guilty, by ſome who put them in hopes of a Pardon on that Condition.

His Lordſhip's ANSWER, with a Form of Prayer he compos'd and ſent them.

Mr. *Palmer*'s Letter to a Noble Lord in *London* on the Day of his Death, denying the Fact.

And Mr. *Palmer* and Mr. *Symond*'s Dying Speeches; wherein they deny it upon their Salvation.

Publiſh'd according to their Dying Requeſt to the Gentleman to whom they gave theſe Papers.

London: Printed and Sold by *Hen. Hills*, in *Black-fryars*, near the Water-ſide. 1708.

A LETTER *from a Gentleman in the Countr to his Friend in* London, *with the following Paper*

SIR,

HErewith you receive *Mr.* Palmer *and Mr.* Symond's *Beginning a End; I mean as far as relates to their Misfortunes upon th cuſation of* Giles Hunt. *I cannot poſitively learn whether M* Symonds *made uſe of his Speech at the Tree, or not, but it's certain M* Palmer *read his, and they both left them under their own Hands. Aft* Symonds *was Executed, Mr.* Dean *the Ordinary demanded of* Palme *upon his Salvation or Damnation, Guilty or not? Who thereon reply Not Guilty. Mr.* Palmer, *after the return of his Wife, wrote a Letter a Peer in* London, *dated the 7th of* May, 1708. *I do not ſend you th because it may not be convenient; I mean, his Honour perhaps may angry. Mr.* Palmer *and Mr.* Symonds *with their own Hands left me t Originals, from which you have the Copies exactly taken, and made their dying Requeſt that they might be Printed, to the end the Wor might underſtand their Caſe; and to that end I have, Sir, communicat them to you for your Judgment; and they may, if you pleaſe be Prin ed in* London; *otherwiſe upon your returning them to me by the Coach, will endeavour to have it perform'd at* Briſtol. *I hope Sir, you will n think me over earneſt, it being a Promiſe made to thoſe now (I can't ſ in their Graves, yet out of this World. I humbly requeſt you will fa o me with a Line, by the next Poſt, that I may know you have receiv'd t Packet.* Sir, Your moſt obedient humble Servant, May 10. 1708. R. W.

The CASE *of* John Palmer *and* Tho. Symonds *Gen*

JOhn *Palmer*, liv'd at *Libbery*, in the Pariſh of *Grafton*, in the Coun of *Worceſter*: *Thomas Symonds* at *Wyer Piddle* in the ſaid Coun Four Miles diſtant. *Alice Palmer*, Widow, living at *Upton Snodgbury* the ſaid County of *Worceſter*, and Mother to the aforeſaid *John Palm* was on the 7th day of *November* 1707. moſt inhumanely Murdered, as ſo was her Servant *Heſter Loxley*, her Houſe Rifled, and afterwards ſet Fire, ſuppoſed to be done with a deſign to ſtifle the Barbarity.

The 20th of the ſaid Month *November*, in the year aforeſaid, on *Hunt* was taken on Suſpicion of being guilty of the aforeſaid Robbery and Fire; the ſaid *Hunt* was bloody; and on the ſaid 20th *November* in the Evening, the Goods of the ſaid Mrs. *Palmer* were fou upon him the ſaid *Giles Hunt*.

The aboveſaid Mr. *Palmer* receiving ſuch Intelligence, came to *Wor ſter*, reſolv'd to Proſecute the ſaid *Hunt* to the utmoſt extremity, brought along with him ſome Pewter Plates that were his Mothers, ſav'd out of the Fire, to compare with thoſe found upon the ſaid *Hu* Whereupon the ſaid *Gyles Hunt* Impeached the ſaid Mr. *Palmer*, Mr. *monds*, and with them one *William Hobbins*, as Partners with him, ſaid *Hunt*, in the ſaid Villany. And on the Evidence of the ſaid G *Hunt*, they, the ſaid *Palmer* and *Symonds*, were on the 21ſt of *Nove ber*, 1707, committed to the Goal of the Out County of *Worceſter*,

here remain'd and took their Tryals, the Assizes following, for a Com-
lication of Facts, as upon their Deaths they declar'd unjustly laid to their
harge, They receiv'd Sentence of Death, and order'd to be hang'd in Irons.
The Day fix'd for Execution was the 16th of *April*, 1708. Between
ntence and which day the Prisoners had the Honour of being visited by
e Right Reverend Father in God, *William*, Lord Bishop of *Oxon*, who
renuously Exhorted them as the first step to Salvation, to make an in-
nuous Confession. And on or about the 14th day of the said Month.
pril, the Reverend Mr. *George Mason*. and Mr. *Thomas Symonds*, Attor-
ey at Law, did, as they pretended, by the Consent of the Bishop of *Ox-*
, assure the said Mr. *Palmer* and *Symonds*, That if they would make a
onfession, his Lordship would obtain 'em a Reprieve, and afterwards would
o to *London*, and never leave her Majesty until he had obtain'd them a
ardon. Upon which the said *Palmer* and *Symonds* did write something
the Nature of a Confession, and were Reprieved to the 7th of this instant
lay. *Hobbins* was Executed the 16th of *April* last, and with him one
ohn Allen likewise, Condemn'd upon the Evidence of the said *Gyles Hunt*.
hey both with their last Breaths denied the respective Facts for which
ey died.

The 7th of this Instant *May*, *John Palmer* and *Thomas Symonds* were
uarded from the Castle of *Worcester* to the Common County Gallows,
nd were there both executed; and both, according to their own Expres-
ons, died innocently. After Mr. *Symonds* was turned off, Mr. *Dean* the
rdinary demanded of Mr. *Palmer* if he was guilty of, or was any ways
ivy or consenting to the Murder of his Mother? Who with the greatest
sservations asserted his Innocency. They both with *Hobbins* hang in Irons
Upon Snodgbury, near to the House where the Fact was by *Hunt* and
s Accomplices committed.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. Palmer *and Mr.* Symonds *to his Lordship the B. of* Oxon, *taken from the Original*, May 3. 1708.

My good Lord,

WE acknowledge your Lordship's Condescension in visiting us afflicted Prisoners, and your Lordship well knows our Innocen-
, stood Proof against many Assaults, as well made by your Lordship, as
hers of the Clergy; under our Hands we deny'd that Barborous and most
human and Villanous Act of which we were by *Hunt* unjustly accus'd,
d for which we were Condemn'd. Upon a Promise of your Lordship's
vour by the Reverend Mr. *Mason* and Mr. *Symonds* first as to a Reprieve,
d a Pardon ensuing, our Thoughts, Death, that horrid and ignominious
th, a Gallows and Irons our Sentence, were distracted, and your
rdship's Ambassdors having the Advantage of time, corrupted our In-
grity, debauch'd our Innocency, and extracted Bad out of Good. Your
rdship's Absence, and what we were prevail'd upon to give under our
nds, have created us more Uneasiness than even our Condemnation it
f; these Expressions cannot be repugnant to your Lordship's Charity,
from dying Men, (past Hopes) they are offer'd. *Gyles Hunt*'s
idence we both declare to be false, malicious and unjust, and beseech the

Almighty to remit his Treſpaſs againſt us. We beg your Lordſhip's Pra
ers and Care of *Palmer*'s Children by his firſt Wife, and when our Inn
cency appears they may inherit our Eſtates perſonal and real. We are,
Lord, with the deepeſt Humility, *My Lord, your Lordſhip's moſt obe
ent, moſt afflicted and diſtreſſed Servants*, John Palmer, Tho. Symond

POSTCRIPT.

My Lord, Mr. *Samuel Aſtley*, Paſtor of *White Lady Aſton*, ow'd me
Lady-Day Four Pounds for Half a Years Rent, I beg your Lordſhip th
my Brother's Children may have the ſame. *Tho. Symonds.*

A Copy of a Letter from his Lordſhip the Biſhop of Oxon, *to Mr.* Pa
mer *and Mr.* Symonds, *taken from the Original*, May. 3. 170

G*Entlemen*, My Concern for your Souls has been ſo great, that I c
hardly deſire yours ſhould have been greater, and I would to God t
Conſideration of your miſerable Condition had produc'd as many Sighs a
Prayers from you as it has from me. I am griev'd at your Letter, whi
I receiv'd this Evening, ſince it confirms what I had heard, and indeed h
too much Reaſon to believe of you, that you have retracted the firſt hap
Step you made towards Repentance and Reconciliation with God, that co
feſſion of your Guilt which you gave under your own Hands, and which
am ſure was not extorted from you by me, any otherwiſe than by telli
you how impoſſible it was for you to obtain Pardon from God witho
Repentance, and how neceſſary a Part of Repentance Confeſſi
was in your Caſes; I did promiſe upon your making that fi
Step I would endeavour to get you a Reprieve, that you mig
have time to perfect that great Work, and aſſur'd you of my poor Aſſiſtan
in it, and I was as good as my Word; but as to my giving you any hop
of a Pardon, I call Heaven and Earth to witneſs that I never flatter'd y
with any ſuch thing. I hope Mrs. *Prat* has given you a true Account
of the Words I ſpoke to her and Mr. *Symonds*, which, as I am inform
have been perverted, to your Prejudice and mine; ſhe was declaring h
Belief of your Innocency, to which I reply'd, That if I were as much ſ
tisfy'd of your Innocency as ſhe ſeem'd to be, and as I was of your Guilt,
would go to *London* and throw my ſelf at Her Majeſty's Feet, and beg f
your Pardon; theſe were my Words, and whoever repreſented them othe
wiſe abus'd both you and me. By thoſe whom you call my Ambaſſadors
ſuppoſe you mean Mr. *Maſon* and Mr. *Symonds*, (the latter of which w
not known to me till he brought me a Meſſage from you) they are bo
your Relations and Friends, and were firſt ſent from you to me; they ha
as I hear, at your deſire, been aſſiſting to you before, and I believe ſerv
you very faithfully; they will both, I dare ſay, do me the Juſtice to o
that whenever I ſent them to you to preſs you to a Confeſſion, I always d
rected them to charge it upon your Conſciences, as I had done my ſelf b
fore, not to accuſe any or your ſelves wrongfully for any Conſideration
who they are that have prevailed with you to retract that Confeſſion, y
beſt know: but take my Word, next to thoſe that engag'd you in the he
nd Crimes for which you have been convicted, thoſe will prove your wo
Enemies that have prevail'd with you to deny your Confeſſion of it. Bo

our Requeſts with Relation to Mr. *Palmer*'s Children ſhall be faithfully erform'd, to the utmoſt of my Power. All that I can do farther for you , to beg you, for the Sake of your immortal Souls, to employ the little ime which is yet before you to better Purpoſes than you have done that, hich I fear you have done worſe than trifle away, make a full and open onfeſſion of your Guilt, take Shame to your ſelves, give Glory to God, hrow your ſelves down before him in the humbleſt Acknowledgments of our Vileneſs, the moſt earneſt Petitions for his Pardon; give him no Reſt, or your ſelves any, Day or Night, but ſpend thoſe few that are remaining n Tears and Prayers, and abhorring your ſelves in Duſt and Aſhes, if hapily the Wickedneſs of your Hearts may be forgiven, and God may ſhew ome Mercy upon you; to his Grace and Mercy you are committed by

Your truly afflicted Servant,

WILLIAM OXON.

A PRAYER deliver'd to Mr. Palmer *and Mr.* Symonds, *by his Lordſhip the Biſhop of* Oxon, *being writ with his Lordſhip's own Hand.*

GReat and Glorious God, look down in Pity and Compaſſion upon the Vileſt of Sinners, who have provoked Thee by a long Courſe of Wickedneſs and Impenitence, to ſuffer us to fall into thoſe heinous crying ins, for which we are juſtly Sentenc'd to Temporal Death, and deſerve o ſuffer that which is Eternal. We acknowledge the Righteouſneſs and quity of Thy Threats, that whoſoever ſheddeth Man's Blood, by Man hall his Blood be ſhed; that the Wicked and Blood-thirſty ſhall not live ut half their Days; that Murderers ſhall have their Portion in the Lake, hat burns with Fire and Brimſtone, for ever. We acknowledge the Juſtice f Thy Providence, in diſcovering thoſe unnatural and barbarous Crimes hich we committed ſecretly in the Night, and in bringing us to open hame and Puniſhment for them here. We acknowledge and adore Thy oodneſs and tender Mercy, in allowing us ſome time to repent of them, nd apply our ſelves to Thee for pardon and forgiveneſs, that we may ot be Eternally damn'd for them hereafter. O help us to employ this ime to the beſt Purpoſes, that we may not by our Abuſe of it aggravate ur Guilt and Condemnation. What ſhall we ſay unto Thee, O Thou reſerver of Man? Shame covereth our Faces, we bluſh to lift up our yes towards Heaven, where the Cry of our Sins is come up before Thee, ven the Voice of Innocent Blood cries for Thy Vengeance againſt us; but racious Lord, hear not the Cry of our Sins, but the Cry of the Blood f Thy Son Jeſus, which ſpeaks better Things than that of *Abel*'s, nothing ut that Blood can expiate or cleanſe us from our Iniquities; O waſh our olluted Souls in that Fountain which thou haſt opened for Sin, and for ncleanneſs. Give us deep Humiliation and Contrition, that Godly orrow for our Sins, which may work Repentance unto Life never to be pented of. Thou only knoweſt the Hearts of Men, and alone canſt hange them; O change theſe Stony Hearts of ours, and give us Hearts of eſh, ſuch broken Hearts as thou wilt not deſpiſe; Let Thy Terrors awaen us before the Flames of Hell ſhall too late do it; humble us ſo under hy mighty Hand, that Thou mayeſt in Thy due time lift us up. We nothing to plead before Thee but Thine own Tender Mercies, and

the Infinite Merits of our Saviour, who died to save Sinners: We, O Lo
are the chiefest of Sinners, but He is a mighty Saviour, able to save
the uttermost, &c. Let the Benefits of His Sufferings and Death be
tended to us. Spare us O God most Holy, O Lord most Mighty; a
though Thou art pleased to give us up to Temporal Death, never deli
us into the bitter Pains of Eternal Death; but work in us, by Thy Gra
and Spirit, that blessed Change of Mind, that Renovation of our wh
inner Man, that our Sins may be done away by Thy Mercy, and our P
dons seal'd in Heaven before we go hence and be no more seen. Hear
O merciful Father, pardon and answer us, and do abundantly more for
than what we are able to ask, ot think, for the sake of that Son of T
Love, the Blessed Jesus, in whose Name and Words we farther call up
Thee, saying, *Our Father*, &c.

Mr. Palmer's *Letter to a Noble Lord at* London, May 7. 170

My Lord,

MY poor unfortunate Wife, returned to me last Night, has report
your Honours Favours, and I pay your Lordship my most humb
Thanks. My Lord, I am now a dying Man, and telling a Story can be
no Service; therefore the World, except cruel to the last Extremity, mu
believe me: In the Presence of God Almighty, I vow I am innocent
the Fact with which I am charged by *Giles Hunt*, and for which I die,
wit, the Murder of my Mother. My Lord, I have no nice Reservatio
upon my Faith, and I fix my Salvation on the Truth of my Expression
directly, or indirectly, I know nothing of the barbarous Murder, comm
ted upon the 7th of *November*, upon the Body of my Mother and Mai
Servant: I humbly beg when I am gone, your Lordship will assist my W
dow, if she begs it, your Lordship's known Justice and Honour encourag
me to this Address: *I am, My Lord,*

Your Honour's most obedient and expiring Servant,

John Palmer.

Mr. Palmer's *Dying Speech*, May *the 7th.* 1708.

Gentlemen,

AS we are corrupt in Nature, so subject to the Temptations of our
gilant Enemy the Devil; and, to my own Shame and Misfortune,
must acknowledge my Thoughts have been polluted, and my Life irreg
lar, prone to Wickedness, ard aukward in the Paths of Righteousness, d
obeying the Almighty, and His most Just and Holy Commands, neglecti
His Divine Precepts, and Sinning in opposition to the Checks of my o
Conscience. Pardon, O God! I beseech Thee, as well my most secr
as my publick Transgressions, put mine Offences far from me, and be n
extream in marking what I have done amiss.

The Charge, Gentlemen, I have made upon my self extends no farth
than the Frailties I doubt we are all, most of us, or at least too many s
ject to, as Men conceiv'd in Sin, and brought forth in Iniquity; and
such, without the extensive Mercies of God the Father, and the Merits
our Saviour, God the Son, we must all be miserably unhappy. Pard
therefore, O God! our Iniquities, Pardon the Iniquities of our Fore-fathe
and take not Vengeance of our Sins, but graciously look upon our Aff

and pitifully behold the Sorrows of our Hearts; mercifully forgive
ins of Thy People. O Son of *David* have Mercy upon us, graciously
us, O Christ, graciously hear us, O Lord Christ.

ext, Gentlemen, give me leave by way of Admonition to observe to
That the way to be happy in this World, is, with a due Diligence, to
your future State; for whilst your Thoughts are so employ'd, the
sures and Debaucheries of this Life do not ensnare your Safety, nor
roy your Fortunes. The Service of your God, the Safety of your Souls,
an honest Provision for your Family, is all you ought to aim at.

Give me leave now, Gentlemen, to descend to the Crime with which I
accus'd, and for which on this Tree I am sentenc'd to undergo that
meful and ignominious Death. I hope, Gentlemen, notwithstanding
false and various Reports of me, you have some Charity and Faith re-
ining, and can credit the Words of an expiring Man. I am sensible that
ust quickly account for all I here say, and therefore shall be cautious in
Expressions. Blessed be God, my Afflictions have not destroyed my
ses. This, Sirs, is my Case.

The 7th of *November* last my Misfortunes took Date; for in the Night
onging to that Day I lost, O Miserable me! I lost the best of Mothers,
d in that lost my Life it self. God grant we may meet, and be eter-
lly happy.

Gentlemen, It is evident one *Giles Hunt* was the Murderer of my Mo
er; he was found bloody, and the Goods upon him; upon which, as a
nvincing Proof, he acknowledg'd himself to be an Actor, and on pro-
se of a Pardon came to Confession; and, as I understand by the Statute,
s obliged to impeach two or more for the Safety of his own Life: But
deed, why he should bring me into that number, I know not, unless to
event my being a Thorn in his Side for so barbarously using my Mother.
ut, Gentlemen, I do assure you in that his Charge upon me he has commit-
d a second Murder: How many more he has so us'd, I know not. Some of
ou undoubtedly saw *Hobbins* and *Allen* executed, and heard their last Words.
hope they were innocent, and that Almighty God receiv'd their Souls.

My good Friends and Neighbours, what I presume you most listen after
a Confession, a Confession reported to be under my Hand to the Lord
hop of *Oxon*. Somewhat, Gentlemen, I must acknowledge by and at
e Persuasions and Importunity of Mr. *Mason* a Divine, and Mr. *Symonds*
n Attorney (his Lordship the Bishop of *Oxon*'s Ambassadors) and their
romises as from his Lordship of a Reprieve, and an ensuing Pardon was
id; but therein I unjustly betray'd my Conscience, dishonoured my In-
grity, and without the especial Mercy of Almighty God damn'd my self.
beseech my most merciful God to forgive me that rash and inconsiderate
ct, and pardon all those who draw'd me thereto.

I shall, Gentlemen, only make a Remark or two, and those very short.
irst, from the Time that *Hunt* acknowledg'd the Fact, I had by *John*
Hawkswood of *Worcester* some hours notice, if I had been guilty, to
ave made my Escape.

Next, Gentlemen, what can be imagin'd I could propose from commit-
ing so horrid a Murder upon my poor Mother, she having no more than
6*l.* a Year Joynture, and my self at that time near upon 200*l.* a Year,
nd 700 and upwards at Interest.

Gen-

Gentlemen, As I am a dying Man, I do aver, to the best of my K
ledge, I never saw *Hunt*, *Hobbins* or *Allen*, before I came to Goal.

Gentlemen, Thus briefly I have shew'd you the Hardships I suffer,
the Impositions laid upon me. God Almighty knows my Innocency,
I hope my unjust Sufferings in this World, and on this Occasion wil
some Measure, attone for the Vanities of my Youth. I praise God
reconcil'd to the Sentence against me, most heartily and chearfully for
all my Accusers and Enemies, and beseech Almighty God, that my B
unjustly shed may not be charg'd upon them. *I say not Guilty, and
your Prayers.* John Palmer.

Mr. Symonds's *Dying Speech*, May *the 7th.* 1708

Gentlemen,

I Hope you have more Charity than to measure my Guilt by my Sufferi
The Evidence *Gyles Hunt* gave against me was untrue in all its Circ
stances. That Night Mrs. *Palmer* was murdered I lay with Mr. *She
Stevens* of *Wyer Piddle*, in his own House. Gentlemen, What sh
induce *Hunt* so wrongfully to accuse me, I know not; but I call Go
witness, and upon my Salvation declare, I am innocent of the Fact
which I die, whether that of *Bradfoarton* or *Upton Snodgsbury*.

Ballard, *Hobbins* and *Allen*, (charg'd Fellow Criminals with me) w
all Strangers to me till committed to the Jail, from whence I now ca
and even *Hunt* himself was never of my Acquaintance. This unfortu
Gentleman, (by Marriage my Brother) Mr. *Palmer*, who shares in my h
and dismal Fate, I do verily believe to be unjustly accus'd. Since he
here, I leave him to speak for himself.

John Crump of Piddle is censur'd upon what Hunt has swore. I affirm I never kn
any ill of that Man.

Now, Gentlemen, give me leave to say somewhat on that occasional Confes
made to the Bishop of Oxon. And thus it was.

After our unhappy Sentence pass'd, Endeavours were us'd to bring me (as expres
to an ingenious Confession: (Blessed be God my Hands were not tinctur'd with t
Blood.) About the 14th of April last Mr. Mason, Schoolmaster at Feckenham, a
Mr. Symonds an Attorney, craftily renew'd their Assaults, pretending an Authority fr
the Bishop of Oxon for promising me a Reprieve, and an ensuing Pardon. Moreov
Mr. Symonds instanc'd (by way of Encouragement) the Case of Mrs. Bis of Glocest
who after Condemnation sav'd her Life, by pretending she would make a Confessio
tho' in Fact (it seem'd) she had nothing to relate. Those, and such like gilded Promi
and delusive Arguments, with the Terrors of Death well set forth, a speedy and such
scandalous Death as this work'd upon the Weakness of my Nature, corrupted my Co
science, and produc'd that Confession, in it self as false as can be; therein I dishonou
my God, standing in more dread of Man, who could only destroy the Body, than t
Almighty and Immortal Being, in whose Power alone it is eternally to destroy bo
Soul and Body. From which Death good Lord deliver me.

Gentlemen, As Man born of a Woman, and so consequently subject to the Va
ries, and expos'd to the Temptations of this Life, I have many Sins to account fo
yet hope, thro' the Merits and Mediations of my Blessed Saviour, to be happy in t
other World. Gentlemen, Let me exhort you all to live a Godly, Sober, and Regul
life, and beg of Almighty God to preserve you from false Witnesses, and malicio
Prosecutions. It's decreed I must thus end my Days in the prime of my Age. I beseec
Almighty God in his infinite Mercy to receive my Soul, and in his own good time
make my Innocency appear to the World.

5 JA 53

Tho. Symonds.

FINIS.